The Nation

Ray Lawyers Try Again for New Trial

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Attorneys for James Earl Ray went to court yesterday in another bid to win him a new trial for the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Judge William Williams of Criminal Court was to rule on a motion filed Jan. 26 by attorneys Mark Lane of Memphis and Charles Galbreath of Nashville.

The motion says Ray's conviction is flawed because no degree of murder — first or second — was specified in the verdict that sent him to prison. It also notes that the original judge in his case, W. Preston Battle, died before he could hear Ray's first motion for a new trial. Tennessee law provides for an automatic appeal when the original judge in a case dies before such a motion can be filed.